



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Do Not Call Registry means Do Not Call - Griffo seeks more severe penalties for violations

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO February 23, 2016

| ISSUE: **TELECOMMUNICATIONS, SENIORS**



UTICA – State Senator Joseph Griffo announced Tuesday new legislation he is sponsoring that would nearly double the punishments for telemarketers who violate the National Do Not Call Registry in New York.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) created the Do Not Call Registry in 2003. But in the 13 years since, it has become apparent that telemarketers continue to call people who have registered with this database, Senator Griffo said during a news conference Tuesday at the North Utica Senior Citizens Community Center.

Currently in New York, a business can be fined up to \$11,000 by the Department of State for every call that violates the registry. But under Senator Griffo's proposed legislation ([S6553](#)), this fine would be increased to \$20,000 per call in order to more severely penalize those businesses that repeatedly disregard the consumers' wishes.

"The federal Do Not Call list is not working as well as it should be, as my constituents continue to tell me they are still getting these bothersome calls from telemarketers," **said state Senator Griffo**, R-Rome, who chairs the Senate Telecommunications and Energy Committee. "If the federal government is going to create a law that promises people they have a right not to be bothered and annoyed by relentless telemarketers over and over again, then those people in the Do Not Call registry shouldn't be bothered."

Senator Griffo's bill will be introduced in the Assembly by Assemblyman Dan Quart, D-Manhattan.

Since the Do Not Call Registry was created in 2003, 222 million people registered their phone numbers with the national database, according to the FTC. In 2013, the FTC received 3.8 million complaints of Do Not Call violations, with more than 100 legal cases having been brought against companies for violating the registry to date.

As a result, \$117 million in civil penalties have been imposed upon those who violated the registry within the first decade of its existence, according to the FTC.

While the Do Not Call Registry has been an effective tool in curbing the number of unwanted calls households received from companies wishing to solicit information or business, Senator Griffo believes the current law is not a severe enough deterrent. The problem: Some businesses make the calculated decision that the money they can make by violating the registry law is greater than what they may lose by paying fines from people reporting these complaints.

By nearly doubling the current fine, Senator Griffo hopes that businesses would feel a more severe financial impact to discourage them from violating the Do Not Call registry.

"As chairman of the Senate Telecommunications and Energy Committee, I believe New York State must do what it can to stop shameless telemarketers from invading the privacy of people who have had enough of these ridiculous phone calls," **Senator Griffo said**. "While New

York gets more serious about the consequences of violating the Do Not Call registry, I believe the federal government also needs to strengthen this law with some real teeth and more aggressively enforce it.”

Senator Griffo was joined by **Laura Palmer, Associate State Director of AARP for the Mohawk Valley**, who offered her support for this proposed legislation.

“Sadly, the old adage that crime pays actually applies to the current fine structure for violations of New York’s Do Not Call Registry,” **Palmer said**. “Incredible as it is, willfully violating the law and paying the fine has actually become a business practice for unscrupulous telemarketers. AARP fully supports Senator Griffo’s bill to nearly double the fines for Do Not Call Registry violations and strengthen the deterrent against scams that too often target our aging adults.”

**To register your phone number in the Do Not Call Registry or to report a complaint of receiving an unwanted telemarketing call, go to [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov) or call 1-888-382-1222.**

###

---

#### RELATED LEGISLATION

---

### 2015-S6553

- 
- Introduced
  
  - - In Committee Assembly
    - In Committee Senate
  
  - - On Floor Calendar Assembly
    - On Floor Calendar Senate

- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
- 

Raises the maximum fine for persons who violate the law regulating telemarketing to twenty thousand dollars

January 26, 2016

In Senate Committee Rules

Sponsored by Joseph A. Griffo

Do you support this bill?